



TURKEY'S BLACK SEA: A WILD, WONDERFUL DISCOVERY

NEW YORK, NY (January 19, 2011) --- Encompassing much of the country's northern boundary and isolated by the rugged Kackar mountains, the narrow coastal Black Sea region of Turkey, is well off the beaten path of many international travelers but treasured by those who discover its unique charms. In addition to fascinating reminders of Turkey's extraordinary history, the region is renowned for its magnificent coastline, scenic seaside and hilltop towns, World Heritage sites, lakes, national parks and some of the wildest natural landscapes in the country that draw intrepid trekkers, climbers and mountaineers from all over Europe.

It should not be surprising that the Black Sea's history was shaped by the nations that ruled the seas. Ancient Greece, the Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire, Genoese, the Venetians and, until the early 20th century and afterwards Ottoman Empire, all put their cultural imprint on the region. They left behind castles overlooking the sea, churches, monasteries and mosques and distinctive architecture – much still intact or lovingly restored. Today, visiting Turkey's Black Sea by cruise ship (a number of lines based in North America offer itineraries that include one or two Turkish Black Sea ports) is one option but, for a more in-depth experience, travelers are advised to fly in to Samsun or Trabzon, two of the larger towns, from Istanbul or Ankara, and rent a car or four-wheel drive vehicle. Comfortable and friendly visitor accommodations are plentiful except in some of the more remote mountain villages.

Though the coastal areas are blessed with moderate temperatures year-round, weather in the mountainous interior can be colder, therefore spring time is the most popular season for exploring the mountains.

Traveling from west to east through the Black Sea region, a visitor might begin in Bolu. From coastal beaches to its famous multi-colored forests of oak, alder, pine, hazelnut and many more varieties of trees, visitors to Bolu can virtually travel through all four seasons of the year within the course of a short drive. Yedigöller or Seven Lakes National Park, is the centerpiece but explorers will also discover hot springs, hiking and walking opportunities and, in winter, one of Turkey's best ski centers.

As early as the 6th century BC, the coastal town of Amasra went by the name Sesamus, and today offers a number of historic attractions, including 14th century Genoese forts, a Roman bridge, Byzantine city walls and historic mosques. Nearby, along the sea, the fishing villages of Cide and Abana are popular excursions, particularly known for their seaside restaurants.

Just inland from Amasra is one of the region's best known attractions: Safranbolu. Its beautifully preserved and restored buildings from the Ottoman Empire, including konaks, or mansions distinctively made of timber and stone, have earned the town a World Heritage Site designation. Other reasons to visit include the Koprulu Mehmet Pasa Mosque and the Kazdagi Mosque, Turkish baths, Shoemakers Street (the town once supplied the Turkish army with shoes) and the scenic Market Street.

Also inland is the town of Kastamonu, with its 12th century castle, ethnographic and archaeology museums, and famous handicrafts, including fabrics, tablecloths, woolens and fruit jams. The expansive pastures in the vicinity offer some of the best trail riding in Turkey and nearby Ilgaz Mountain National Park is noted for its deer, foxes and bear as well as culinary traditions that include whole lamb cooked slowly in clay ovens.

Back on the Black Sea coast, the town of Samsun is where Mustafa Kemal Atatürk drew up plans for what became the modern Turkish Republic; the hotel where he stayed honors him as the Gazi Museum. Samsun also offers an Archaeological and Ethnologic Museum, with an impressive collection of antiquities and not far away, at Bafra, are excavations dating back to the Hittite Iron Age civilization. The thermal springs of Havza, approximately 50 miles away, are another popular day trip.

Continuing eastward, Trabzon is the largest city in the region and a cruise port dating back to 7,000 B.C. It remains a major trading port, evolving from an early Greek colony to an important cultural center on the busy Black Sea. Under the Venetians, the town became an important feature of the famous Silk Route before the rule of Ottomans in 1461. Today's visitor will find historic churches and mosques as well as other landmarks, including a villa belonging to Atatürk on the town's periphery. Built by Manuel I in the 13th century, Ayasofia Church sits on top of a hill in the center of the city; the origins of the Church of Saint Eugenios, now the Yeni Cuma Mosque, are lost in the mists of time.

Just inland from Trabzon is the Sumela Monastery, one of the true treasures of the Black Sea region. Begun in the 4th century by the Greek monks, Barnabas and Sophronius, and built high into the cliffs of Mt. Mela, the monastery has been restored and rebuilt over the centuries.

Not far away, the alpine region of Zigana in the Kalkanli Mountains is renowned for its natural beauty and popular for day trips. The extraordinary 3,200-foot high alpine lake at Uzungol is popular among campers, hikers and fishermen, who prize the lake's trout. Even more rugged is the Yusufeli designated conservation area inland from the Georgian border. This remote area of lakes and historic Georgian and Armenian churches offers an unforgettable white water rafting experience as well as ecotours on the famous Coruh River.

Offering more cultural comforts is the nearby town of Artvin, which is famous throughout Turkey for its many festivals celebrating regional cultures and featuring music, food, costumes, dancing and other traditional celebrations. The most popular is the Bull Fighting Festival. Visitors will also find other picturesque rural villages in the area as well as the Karagol-Sahara National Park, which is noted for its forests and lakes.

Finally, visitors to the extraordinary Black Sea region will discover unique culinary traditions: Black Sea cuisine, including the roots of the world-famous Turkish tea. Strongly influenced by geography and climate, mountains and sea, food featured in this region includes the black anchovy, or "hamsi," corn served in endlessly interesting ways, pickled green beans, an abundance of other vegetables and Akcabat Kofte (meatballs). Sweet helva, made with corn, butter and local honey, is another local favorite, as are, of course, a great variety of Black Sea and river fish (including farm-raised trout), considered by many to be the tastiest in the world.

The Turkish tea industry is based in the town of Rize in the Black Sea region where a moist moderate climate provides perfect growing conditions. While green tea is exported all over the world, travelers should be prepared to enjoy the local favorite, the strong, smoky black variety that, traditionally served with sugar, is as much a social event and opportunity for human interaction as it is a beverage. But tea is not the only appeal of Rize and its surroundings. Not far away are the dramatic Kackar Mountains, with their waterfalls, highlands and peaks – magnets for hikers and climbers from around the world. Glacier lakes are adorned with yellow rhododendrons, found nowhere else in Turkey at these altitudes, and Mt. Kackar itself, one of the world's ecological treasures, is home to bears, wolves, lynxes and mountain goats.

For more information on Turkey and its Black Sea region, call 1-877-FOR-TURKEY or contact the Turkish Culture and Tourist Offices in New York at 212-687-2194; Washington, D.C. at 202-612-6800; and Los Angeles at (323) 937-8066. Information is also available at www.tourismturkey.org or www.goturkey.com. Take a virtual tour of Turkey [here](#).

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About Turkey

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Press Contact:

M. Silver Associates

(212) 754-6500

Carrie Hyman Carrie@msilver-pr.com



MUSIC, SPORTS AND ARTS – ISTANBUL SUMMER FESTIVALS HAVE SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

New York, NY – (DATE) - Planning a trip to Turkey this year? Here is an extra reason to go: experience a full lineup of some of the most exciting celebrations, festivals and sports competitions taking place throughout the year in Turkey's largest city, Istanbul.

Highlighted below are only a few of the events that take place in Istanbul this year:

- **International Istanbul Music Festival (June 4 – 29, 2011)**: Istanbul is home to the International Istanbul Music Festival, where classical music enthusiasts gather for a marathon of good music which lasts almost a month. The 39th edition of the festival features more than 500 artists and takes place in several historical venues, including the Topkapi Palace. Throughout the summer, other Istanbul festivals incorporate theatre, film and jazz into their programs. The Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts is responsible for this cultural boom and has been awarded the *Trophée Internationale des Arts et de la Culture* by the *Institut International de Promotion et de Prestige* of UNESCO.
- **Turkish oil wrestling and 650th Traditional Kirkpinar Festival Week (July 8 - July 10, 2011)**: Oil wrestling is one of the most popular sports in Turkey. *Yagligures* means literally oiled wrestling. The annual Kirkpinar tournament, held in Edirne in Turkish Thrace since 1362, is the oldest continuously running sporting competition in the world. In recent years this style of wrestling has also become popular in other countries, particularly in the Netherlands and Japan. Thousands of people from different age groups, cultures and regions travel every year to see *Pehlivan* (wrestlers) fight for the Kirkpinar Golden Belt and the title of Chief Pehlivan. The Kirkpinar oil wrestling festival was to UNESCO'S "*Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*" list in 2010.
- **The International Istanbul Jazz Festival (July 1 – 18, 2011)**: The International Istanbul Jazz Festival presents a remarkable variety of music, ranging from traditional and contemporary jazz to rock, electronic and world music. Among the many artists to have graced stages throughout the years are Ray Charles, Miles Davis and Dizzy Gillespie. Performances are held at venues such as the Cemil Topuzlu Open Air Theatre, Istanbul Museum of Modern Art and Cemal Resit Rey Concert Hall.

- **Bosphorus Cross Continental (July 17, 2011)**: Bosphorus Cross Continental is Istanbul's annual Asia-to-Europe swimming, rowing and sailing competition. Thousands of Turkish and international athletes aged 14 to 71 join in the competition under the motto "everyone needs sport". Visitors can also enjoy water-skiing and jet-skiing shows. The swimming competition begins in the ferry port of Kanlica on the Black Sea, the Asian side of Istanbul, and ends in Kuruçesme Cemil Park on the European side - a total distance of 4 miles. The rowing race takes place on a 1-mile course stretching from the Arnavutköy ferry port to Kuruçesme Cemil Park bleachers, while the regattas depart from the Kandilli ferry port and end in Kuruçesme Cemil Park.
- **12th Istanbul Biennial, 2011 (September 17 – November 13, 2011)**: The 12th Istanbul Biennial, organized by the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts and sponsored by Koç Holding, is set for September 17 - November 13, 2011, under the curatorship of Adriano Pedrosa and Jens Hoffmann. The Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts has been organizing the International Istanbul Biennial since 1987. The Biennial aims to create a meeting point in Istanbul in the field of visual arts between artists from diverse cultures and the audience. Considered one of the most prestigious biennials alongside the ones in Venice, Sao Paulo and Sydney, the Turkish biennials organized so far have led to the creation of an international network consisting of local and international art circles, artists, curators and art critics.
- **Contemporary Istanbul (November 14 – 27, 2011)**: As the most extensive "modern and contemporary art" event in Turkey, *Contemporary Istanbul* aims to promote the cultural and artistic life of Turkey. For four days in November, Contemporary Istanbul will host national and international galleries with participants from all over the world, including artists, collectors, museum directors, and curators, who gather at Istanbul Convention and Exhibition Center (ICEC). In addition to the main event, *Contemporary Istanbul* is organizing other events and art projects throughout the year with the goal of enriching the country's contemporary art development.

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home of the Virgin Mary, just to name a few. Today Turkey, with its spectacular coastline, majestic mountains, cosmopolitan cities and quaint villages is one of the world's most fascinating destinations.

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CAPPADOCIA: SURREAL LANDSCAPES, UNDERGROUND CITIES, CAVE GALLERIES AND HOTELS – PLUS OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Hollywood is justifiably famous for creating movie landscapes and stories that can defy imagination; that is what makes them memorable. And, that is what makes Cappadocia so extraordinary – an unimaginably strange and magical landscape shaped entirely by nature and human history. Amazing special effects, all created by wind and water and rough tools; no technology, tricks or mirrors.

Situated in Turkey's Central Anatolia region, this is a moonscape of deep ravines and valleys, cliffs, volcanic peaks, precariously balanced rocks, and countless "chimneys" – tall, ancient pillars and minaret-like towers carved into the stone over millions of years by the forces of nature. But, it is what lies beneath the landscape that makes Cappadocia so incredible: 6th century monasteries and churches, cave dwellings, mansions and houses connected with networks of underground tunnels, even entire cities carved into the soft volcanic lava that shaped the land 65 million years ago.

For visitors, Cappadocia represents an unforgettable opportunity to discover the remarkable ingenuity of human civilization over more than 5000 years with a unique natural landscape. Along the way, they will encounter Assyrian traders, Alexander the Great, Jesus and the earliest Christians, Roman soldiers, Ottoman emperors and much more.

In the Bronze Age, the Hittite civilization lived in Cappadocia. Ancient cuneiform tablets discovered in Cappadocia attest to the arrival of Assyrian traders more than 4000 years ago when the area was home to a series of small, independent kingdoms. The first written mention of the name Cappadocia dates to the 6th century BC. The writings of the Greek historian Herodotus refer to the Cappadocians and, by the 1st century BC, Alexander the Great, in his legendary sweep across most of the civilized world, had taken control of much of the region. In Persian, Cappadocia means "Land of Beautiful Horses." Over the centuries, Cappadocia came under the rule of the Byzantines, the Seljuks and, finally, the mighty Ottoman Empire.

In the Bible's book of Acts, Cappadocians are mentioned as an audience for sermons by the Galileans just after the resurrection of Christ and this introduces the most remarkable period of all for the region. Persecuted by the Romans, early Christians sought refuge here, first living in underground caves, then taking part in the building of what amounted to hidden underground societies. They built churches and chapels, dwellings, even monasteries all underground and it was here that much of early Christian philosophy evolved.

This fascinating historical and cultural heritage as well as Cappadocia's natural landscapes add up to an exceptional vacation experience year-round. Following are some highlights of places to see and ways to see them:

- **The Goreme Open Air Museum:** one of the most visited sites in Cappadocia, features more than 30 rock-hewn churches and chapels, 1000-year old colorfully painted frescoes, hundreds of "fairy chimneys" and other spectacular rock formations. Goreme itself was an important Christian religious center for 900 years, until the 13th century.
- **Underground cities:** Nobody knows for sure how many underground cities lie below the surface of Cappadocia; 40 have been identified but only a handful have been excavated. These communities included everything: residential areas, kitchens, meeting halls, storage depots for grain and produce, and areas to keep livestock. Used since the Bronze Age, a book written in 4 B.C. said: "The houses were built underground; the entrances were like wells but they broadened out lower down. There were tunnels dug in the ground for the animals while the men went down by ladder. Inside the houses there were goats, sheep, cows and poultry with their young." The most famous underground city may be Derinkuyu, where Christians hid from the Roman army on seven levels that could accommodate thousands of residents. Others include Tatlarin and Kaymakli.
- **Pigeon Valley:** The largest and longest valley in Cappadocia open for tours, Pigeon Valley's name derives from the many pigeon houses carved into the valley's walls by the residents of Uchisar. The boxes are multi-storied, with nesting boxes and decorated with folk art.
- **Urgup:** This is one of the earliest settlements of Cappadocia, in use throughout the region's history and now a popular tourist attraction because of its cave hotels, discos and nightclubs as well as many ancient churches.
- **Avanos:** Famous for its terra cotta pottery since 3000 BC, Avanos continues to produce distinctive clay jugs, jars and other objects and also offers a number of archaeological sites dating back to the Old Bronze Age.
- **Wineries:** Cappadocia has a fascinating history of wine production, with award-winning wineries that take advantage of the many natural and manmade caves for perfect storage conditions.
- **Hot air ballooning:** Drifting with the breeze at sunrise above the ravines and rock formations may be the most enjoyable way to explore the unique landscapes of Cappadocia. Cappadocia is one of the greatest balloon journeys in the world.
- **Horseback riding:** Cappadocia means "Land of Beautiful Horses". Riding the beautiful Cappadocian horses amidst the remarkable scenery is an unforgettable experience.

- **Trekking and mountain biking:** From hidden trails and backcountry single tracks to the captivating valleys and canyons, experience spectacular volcanic rock formations and landforms that are millions of years old, cave villages, Anatolian vegetation and animal species of Cappadocia.
- **Thermal springs:** After a few days of sightseeing, a therapeutic bath in a thermal spring may be just what is needed. Ziga's springs are reputed to be excellent for a variety of aches and pains, as well as everything from skin conditions to eyesight problems. The lake region of Acigol, featuring a deep crater lake, has been declared a thermal spring tourism center by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

Cappadocia is easily accessed by air, with daily scheduled flights from Istanbul to Kayseri and the Nevsehir Cappadocia Airport, or overland by car.

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ISTANBUL HIP & COOL: THE UNIQUE, SOPHISTICATED PLEASURES IN ONE OF THE GREATEST CITIES IN THE WORLD

NEW YORK, NY (April 11, 2011) --- Because Istanbul is known only as an exotic and historic city, few are aware that it has become a hip, cool destination with incredible designers, sophisticated restaurants and cafes, music festivals with top Turkish and international talent, trendy boutiques and a lively nightlife that attracts cosmopolitan travelers from around the world.

Below are a few suggestions for places to "see and be seen" in Istanbul:

Lunch at Istanbul Modern

Situated in a converted warehouse on the Bosphorus, the Istanbul Modern features contemporary art by local artists, a sculpture garden and restaurant. After strolling through the exhibits, be sure to plan lunch on the stylish terrace overlooking the Bosphorus, where the view rivals the art and the food is wonderful too.

Get a Bird's Eye View: Mikla and 360

Mikla, located on the roof of the Marmara Pera Hotel is one of the city's most elegant dining venues and has unforgettable skyline views. One of the coolest bars in Istanbul, 360 is a rooftop lounge with panoramic views of the city's skyline from the spire of St. Antoine Church to Topkapi Palace and Sultanahmet. Its central location on Istiklal Street makes it popular with trendsetters in Istanbul, who congregate for sunset cocktails, artfully presented modern Turkish cuisine and the latest dance tunes played by popular DJs.

Istanbul's newest restaurants, nightspots and cafes

- **Nublu Istanbul @ Babylon**, an offshoot of Nublu NYC, offers hot music groups and artists, and is owned by internationally acclaimed Turkish jazz artist İlhan Erşahin.
- **Bird Bar & Grill**, serves world cuisine inspired by the chef's travels to France, Italy, New York and elsewhere.
- **Up Lounge Bar & Restaurant** in the New Tulip City Hotel welcomes customers with a modern Mediterranean and seafood menu prepared by Pelin Görpe, a young chef who cooked in several popular restaurants in the United States.
- **Corvus Wine & Bite**, owned by the Corvus Vineyards, offers a great spot for a glass of wine and tapas dishes.
- Owned and managed by the 360 Group, **Fish** is a multi-level venue specializing in unique appetizers and seafood dishes.

Foodie Havens: Contrast of Contemporary and Classic

- **Minyon at W Istanbul:** The latest venue for Istanbul's hottest new chef, Emre Capa, Minyon has become one of the stars of the city's trendy dining and nightlife scene. This contemporary space provides an upbeat entertaining evening of dining on Capa's "small plates" cuisine, viewing artwork by young Turkish artists and feeling the rhythm of electronic and lounge music. Surprising dishes from around the globe such as mint and lemon risotto, a square ciabatta burger with pear confit, and mastic cr me br lee blend with Capa's special style.
- **Asitane's** chef has spent years studying the recipes of the lavish Ottoman era and serves true Ottoman "court" cuisine with over 200 historic dishes. The restaurant's charming garden provides an oasis of tranquility amidst the energy of downtown Istanbul. It is located beside a hidden treasure, ancient Chora Church with its rare and spectacular frescos of the life of Mary.

Explore a trendy neighborhood - Cihangir

Cihangir is a small bohemian neighborhood where many painters, caricaturists, actors, writers, journalists and foreigners reside and enjoy the bookstores, galleries, and boutiques. The area's many cafes and bistros provide a venue for lively conversations about theater, film, literature, politics and philosophy. Book a table at the bustling **Meyra Caf  and Restaurant** or visit other popular spots including **Caf  Susam, Kahvedan** and **Smyrna**.

Cool Art on the Edge

When Americans think of Istanbul they tend to think of history, the glories of the opulent Ottoman Empire and ancient archaeological sites. In fact, Turkey's cultural capital also has one of the liveliest contemporary art scenes in the world.

- Opened in 2005 in what had once been Istanbul's Victorian-era Bristol Hotel, the **Pera Museum** is a cultural center with permanent and changing exhibits of art and ceramics
- **Santral Istanbul**, another new contemporary art museum, was created by Istanbul Bilgi University as a project for urban revitalization and encompasses educational programs, outdoor recreation areas, residences for visiting artists and ample space for the creation and display of contemporary works of art
- **Misir Apartments**, deceptively contained in a restored 19th-century building, are home to some of Istanbul's most controversial and modern artists whose works are regularly shown in galleries on the premises. Visit the **Galerist** and **Galeri Nev** which showcase the work of local artists who have caught the attention of international dealers.

Shopping, Chic and Funky Markets and Boutiques

There may be no better place in the world to shop than Istanbul. Already famous for its **Ortak y Bazaar**, the 4000 shops in the 15th century **Grand Bazaar** and colorful 17th century **Spice Market**, Istanbul is also home to trendy shopping areas full of designer boutiques, which attract sophisticated visitors from around the world:

- **Nisantasi** on Istanbul's European side and **Ba dat Caddesi**, or Baghdad Avenue, on the Asian side are the "Rodeo Drives" of Istanbul

- The handsomely restored **Akaretler** row houses in Besiktas are known for their expensive homes, museums, art galleries and exclusive shops
- The little neighborhood **Cukurcuma** is a favorite among antique experts and artists
- Equally artistic **Cihangir**, with its hilly streets, small boutiques, vintage shops and cafes might make you think of San Francisco.

For more information on Turkey, call 1-877-FOR-TURKEY or contact the Turkish Culture and Tourist Offices in New York at 212-687-2194 or in Washington, D.C., at 202-612-6800, or Los Angeles at 323-937-8066 and visit their Web sites at www.tourismturkey.org.

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Carrie Hyman

Carrie@msilver-pr.com

BECOME AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED CHEF WITH “CHEFSCHOOL” PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAM AT THE ISTANBUL CULINARY INSTITUTE

Istanbul, Turkey – (June 22, 2011) – The Istanbul Culinary Institute is proud to announce the upcoming session of the *Chefschool* program, a six-month certificate program offered jointly with Kadir Has University Lifelong Education Center. With the fall session starting on October 17, the program’s general mission is to train fully qualified professionals for the culinary industry in Turkey and abroad.

Chefschool’s full-time, 792-hour curriculum starts with internationally accredited “foundation kitchen principles” based on classic French techniques and offered in collaboration with the Institute of Culinary Education in New York. This module is followed by a comprehensive Turkish cuisine training provided by some of the most accomplished chefs in the industry. In their final module, students acquire hands-on practical training in the kitchen of the in-house *Enstitu Restaurant*, (Istanbul Culinary Institute’s popular restaurant open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner), actively taking part in different workstations under the supervision of their chefs. In addition to sharpening their kitchen skills, they take part in the design of daily and monthly menus based on fresh seasonal ingredients and learn about speed, teamwork, wine-food pairing and cost-control.

Those enrolled in the program can choose from four different sessions and between weekday and weekend classes. Weekday sessions take place January – July, April – October, July – January or October – April. Weekend program takes place March – October and September – May.

With tuition costs of about \$9,100 for the six-month period, *Chefschool* offers competitive and affordable professional culinary training at highest international standards, certified by one of the top ranking private universities in Turkey. The program accommodates international students by providing simultaneous instruction in Turkish and English. The training and demo kitchens of Istanbul Culinary Institute are located in both the main building in Pera and in the new campus of Kadir Has University on the Golden Horn, providing the students with fully-equipped, state-of-the-art working environments in lively urban settings. Alumni of the program, Turkish and foreigners alike, testify that in addition to giving them the lifetime gift of a desirable profession, *Chefschool* offers a unique opportunity to experience the vibrant culture and cuisine of a fascinating metropolis at the crossroads of Europe and the Orient.

Located in the busy Galata/Pera district at the cosmopolitan heart of Istanbul’s booming cultural, artistic and culinary life, the Istanbul Culinary Institute is a cooking school dedicated to the research, teaching and promotion of Turkish and Mediterranean cuisines.

For more information on the class schedules and the application process, please visit www.istanbulculinary.com

**** FREE EVENT NOTICE ****

Experience the Best of Turkish Music in Central Park at *Istanbulive III: The Sounds of Civilization* at SummerStage NYC

Friday, June 17th - 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at Rumsey Playfield, Central Park

New York, NY (May 16, 2011) – The third installment of *Istanbulive*, a celebration of Turkish music and culture, is returning to Central Park's SummerStage on Friday, June 17. The event brings together one of the largest, most diverse assemblies of musicians from Turkey and with a combined attendance of nearly 12,000 in 2009 and 2010, it continues to be the most prominent introduction of Turkish music to the United States.

During the Friday evening concert, several of Turkey's most talented artists will perform a free-to-the-public show sponsored by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism. With the goal of engaging both first-time listeners and Turkish audiences alike, event producers, Serdar Ilhan and Mehmet Dede, have booked an exciting lineup of musicians who encompass myriad East-meets-West sounds from Turkish rock and jazz to dance, global pop and folk.

Performers at *Istanbulive III: The Sounds of Civilization* will include:

- **Zülfü Livaneli** is a longstanding force in Turkish arts and culture. He has composed over three hundred songs, thirty film soundtracks, a rhapsody and a ballet. His compositions have reached cult status in Turkey and have been performed by internationally renowned artists such as U2 and Joan Baez. Livaneli is most known for his fusion of Turkish folk music with contemporary music. He is a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador whose long musical career has spanned generations -- this year celebrates his 40th year of musical accomplishments.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSTrijHf8Oc&feature=related>

- Turkish alternative rock giant **maNga** formed in 2001 when frontman Yagmur Sarigul broke from his regular gig in a local cover band to experiment with his own fusion of rock and electronic music. The band consists of five members including a drummer, bass guitarist, vocalist, a turntable dj and electric guitarist. maNga first came into the spotlight in 2004 after the release of their self-titled album with Sony Music Turkey. The band has headlined several important music festivals and was awarded the Best European Act award at the 2009 MTV Europe Music Awards. maNga continues to grow in popularity as their fusion of Anatolian melodies, rock, electronic and hip-hop reaches new audiences around the world.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pdw27j_usP0

- Masters of contemporary Balkan Gypsy music, **New York Gypsy All-Stars (NYGA)** live up to their name by blending traditional Gypsy and Turkish melodies with a scorching jazz and funk backbone. Equally at home in a

concert hall or a downtown club, NYGA embraces opportunities to bring their music to new listeners in non-traditional spaces.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p66kffsA_mQ

Event Details: *Istanbulive III: The Sounds of Civilization* takes place at Central Park SummerStage on Friday, June 17 from 6:00–10:00 p.m. and is free to the public. Central Park SummerStage is located at Rumsey Playfield in Central Park, accessible by entrances at E. 69th Street and Fifth Avenue, and W. 72nd Street and Central Park West.

For more information about *Istanbulive III*, please visit:

<http://www.istanbulive.org/2011>

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İZMİR: THE SECRET TURKISH CITY THAT'S WORTH DISCOVERING

New York, NY – (DATE) – No trip to Turkey is complete without including a visit to Izmir – the perfect hub to enjoy the full range of attractions that lure visitors to Turkey – a cosmopolitan and accessible city, the most spectacular archeological wonders in Turkey, fantastic seaside restaurants, dynamic nightlife, beautiful beaches and a warm Turkish welcome.

Turkey's third largest city in size and the second-largest port city after Istanbul, Izmir, known as the "Pearl of the Aegean," is located along the Gulf of Izmir on the eastern shores of the Aegean Sea. From the famous Ephesus to the Seven Churches, from the annual International Festival to the abundance of local dishes and regional foods, Izmir is a destination in itself and offers something new and exciting with each and every visit.

Highlighted below are some of the attractions from the city of Izmir, its nearby surroundings and noteworthy smaller towns from the area:

Izmir City Center:

- **Walk on Alsancak, Pasaport Quay:** Alsancak is a centrally located quarter in Izmir within the district of Konak, the historic center of the city. Another historic and beautiful walking area beside Izmir's port, the Pasaport Quay features a plethora of cafes, restaurants and nightclubs. Don't miss Konak Pier, one of the landmarks of Izmir, designed by Gustave Eiffel in 1890.
- **Synagogue district:** There are nine synagogues in Izmir, situated in the traditional Jewish quarter of Karataş or in Havra Sokak (Synagogue Street) in Kemeraltı. Designed with 19th century architecture, they were built or re-constructed on the foundations of former buildings
- **Kemeraltı Bazaar:** Set up by the Ottomans and combined with the Agora, the famous bazaar is located near the slopes of Kadifekale. The shopping mecca has been a favorite among tourists as well as locals, offering apparel, textiles and jewelry.
- **Karsikaya:** For a peaceful and relaxing afternoon, stroll along the lush gardens and orchards which adorn the shorelines or walk around the Levantine Mansions that are beautifully located along the waterfront.
- **Clock Tower:** A famous site in Izmir's harbor, the beautiful marble tower 82 ft in height was designed by the Levantine French architect Raymond Charles Père in 1901.

Landmarks nearby Izmir:

- **Ephesus:** one of Turkey's most well known tourist attractions and one of the best preserved ancient cities in Eastern Mediterranean. The city is famous for the Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the World. The historical site offers well preserved ruins from the period of St. Paul, the Odeon, the Monumental Fountain, the Library and the Great Theater. The newest attraction at the site is the Terrace Houses which boasts almost intact frescoes, mosaics and layers of frescoes that indicate that the lifestyle from that period is not too far from the customs practiced nowadays.
- **Kusadasi Cruise Port**, just 40 miles from Izmir, is one of the most popular stops on a Mediterranean or Aegean cruise. Cruise passengers take tours to many of the locations in and around Izmir.
- **Shrine of Virgin Mary**, the home where she spent the last years of her life.
- **Pergamon:** a well-established town in antiquity, Pergamon was chosen as the home for the Temple of Zeus. Tourists can visit the Acropolis and see the Temple of Athena, the library, the Royal Palaces, the Temple of Trojan, the steepest theater in the world, the Temple of Dionysos, the Altar of Zeus and much more.
- **Seven Churches:** even though they are not considered real churches, they represent the first communities for Christians who escaped from the Romans and started to worship. Three of these churches are in İzmir: Ephesus, Smyrna and Pergamon Churches.
- **Ancient cities: Priene** was the first planned city of the ancient world. Stop by in **Miletus**, one of the principal Ionian cities, which St. Paul visited twice. **Didyma** has the best-preserved temple of Apollo. **Sardis** was the ancient capital of ancient Lydia. Today visitors see the great Temple of Artemis, the golden river Pactalos, the Persian Royal Road, the reconstructed Synagogue, and the Gymnasium.

Nearby resorts and seaside towns include:

- **Çeşme:** a charming resort known for its healing mineral springs, excellent beaches and crystal clear waters on Turkey's Aegean coastline.
- **Dalyankoy:** a fisherman's village nestled in a sheltered deep water inlet in the northern part of Çeşme. Some call it "**the Bosphorus of Çeşme.**" The town is known for its fresh seafood.
- **Alaçatı:** village famous for its architecture, vineyards and windmills. It is also the Turkish center for windsurfing and kitesurfing, with its clear sea combined with consistent and steady wind during 300 days of the year.
- **Foça:** the picturesque seaside town at the mouth of the Gulf of Izmir is set around two arching bays, known locally as Big Sea and Little Sea. This charming village has a mild Aegean climate, excellent restaurants and less crowded beaches. The famous Siren Rocks mentioned in Homer's Odyssey can be seen across the bay. Many locals from Izmir go to Foça simply for the daily fresh seafood brought back by the fishermen, served at cozy seaside restaurants along the cobblestone promenade.

- **Şirince:** Beautiful Şirince is one of the very few genuinely historic villages left in the Western seaboard of Turkey. Almost all of the houses date back to before the 19th century. Locals make wine and olive oil using the vineyards and olive groves covering the hills of Şirince. No visitor can leave this area without tasting the fruit wines, made of apple, apricot, banana, blackberry, blueberry and mulberry (black, and white) to mandarin orange, melon, orange, peach, quince, sour (Morello) cherry and strawberry.
- **Tire:** a remote little village with the largest town market in Turkey, taking place each Tuesday and Friday. The Old Quarter of Tire is full of beautiful, Ottoman architecture.

For more information on Turkey, call 1-877-FOR-TURKEY or contact the Turkish Culture and Tourist Offices in New York at 212-687-2194; Washington, D.C. at 202-612-6800; and Los Angeles at (323) 937-8066. Information is also available at www.tourismturkey.org or www.goturkey.com. Take a virtual tour of Turkey [here](#).

About Turkey

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MEDIA CONTACT:
M. Silver Associates
212-754-6500
Miruna Seitan
miruna@msilver-pr.com



NEW HOTELS, RESORTS AND RESTAURANTS REFLECT TURKEY'S GROWING STATURE AS ONE OF EUROPE'S LEADING TOURISM DESTINATIONS

NEW YORK, NY (March 15, 2011)– New hotels, resorts and restaurants in Istanbul and other parts of the country are shaping a unique, multi-faceted tourism experience that continues to welcome growing numbers of international travelers to Turkey. By end of 2010, the country had registered an increase in international arrivals of almost six percent, including almost three percent more Americans. Highly respected international and local hospitality brands with new properties are attracting global attention, even among pet owners.

Here is a summary of some of the latest developments:

Hilton, one of the most famous names in global hospitality, is expanding rapidly in Turkey. **Hilton Garden Inn** opened in Konya in November 2010. Other Hilton Garden Inns will open in Sanliurfa, Mardin, Istanbul-Bostanci, and Istanbul-Golden Horn this year. **Doubletree by Hilton** opened in Avanos Cappadocia in January 2011. Other Doubletree by Hilton properties will open in Istanbul-Avcilar, Istanbul's Asian Side-Moda, Istanbul's Old City this year. The **Hilton Bursa Convention Centre & Spa** opens in late 2011, as does a new **Hampton by Hilton** in Bursa and in Ordu. www.hilton.com.tr

Istanbul will too have its first seven-star hotel by Spring 2011, the **Edition Hotel Istanbul**, a joint venture of Marriott Hotels and Palmali Holding. Costing US\$ 135 million, the 15 storey tower with 78 guest rooms and a magnificent, full-floor penthouse hotel is designed by Ian Schrager, using Ottoman traditions of extraordinary craftsmanship with a thoroughly contemporary concept using a color palate of bronze and silver-gold combined with light and dark woods. This sophisticated hotel provides several venues for relaxing, working and entertaining including its Cipriani Restaurant, three-storey spa by ESPA, Lobby Bar, Drawing Room, Screening Room and Nightclub, plus its meeting spaces and business center. . www.editionhotels.com/

Divan Corlu opened in July, 2010. The first hotel chain in Çorlu, 75 miles north of Istanbul, Divan has brought its "business class" concept to the city with a 120-room property featuring a Divan Brasserie, fitness center and four high-tech meeting rooms.. Divan is also rebuilding one of Istanbul's landmark buildings, the 50-year-old Divan Istanbul in Taksim, the city's social, cultural and business center. The new hotel, renovated at a cost of approximately US\$50 million is designed by the famous French architect Thierry W. Despont, and will open this year, with 228 rooms, 2 themed restaurants, Divan pastisserie, carpark, fitness, a spa, swimming pool and large meeting and conference rooms. <http://www.divan.com.tr>

Appetizing Newcomers on the Istanbul dining scene

Cipriani Istanbul Restaurant just opened. It is located in the luxurious Istanbul EDITION Hotel which will open in spring 2011. The first Cipriani restaurant was founded in 1931 by Giuseppe Cipriani near Piazza San Marco in Venice and swiftly became a hallmark for elegant social experience in the world's most sophisticated cities. Cipriani at the Istanbul EDITION hotel combines the Cipriani heritage along with the relaxed joie de vivre of Istanbul's café society.

Nublu Istanbul @ Babylon, an offshoot of Nublu NYC, offers hot music groups and artists, and is owned by internationally acclaimed Turkish jazz artist İlhan Erşahin. Snacks are served.

The Istanbul Culinary Institute is now open for dinner. Serving Turkish/Mediterranean specialties with reasonable prices and specialties that change daily, the a la carte dinner menu changes every month and includes classic dishes like risottos or fillet of beef with demi-glace or béarnaise sauce as well as traditional Turkish dishes like chickpea stew with rice and pickles, zucchini fritters or chicken and almond soup.

Bird Bar & Grill opened in October, 2010 under the direction of Joost Rooijmans. The restaurant serves world cuisine and includes a bar reflecting a combination of decors inspired during a trip Rooijmans and his wife and partner Aliye Turagay took through France, Italy and New York.

The **Agatha Restaurant** in the **Pera Palace Hotel** pays tribute to the three major stops of the former Orient Express, - Paris, Venice and Istanbul - by serving a combination of French, Italian and Turkish cuisine. The restaurant is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, with an open show kitchen and an extensive wine cellar.

Up Lounge Bar & Restaurant in the New Tulip City Hotel offers modern Mediterranean cuisine and a special seafood menu prepared by Pelin Görpe, a young chef who has worked in several popular restaurants in the United States. Guests also enjoy live jazz, soul, house and funk music.

Fish is owned and managed by the fashionable 360 Group. The multi-level venue has an open terrace and serves a variety of unique appetizers and seafood dishes.

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Press Contact:

M. Silver Associates

(212) 754-6500

Haldun Dincetin

haldun@msilver-pr.com



RUNNING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HISTORY

Six-day, 150-mile Ultra Marathon on Turkey's Mediterranean Coast, on Rugged, Ancient Lycian Way

CAPPADOCIA, Turkey (date) --- Registration is open for the ***Lycian Way Ultra Marathon***, one of the world's most grueling tests of human endurance, which will take place September 24 to October 2 on Turkey's magnificently beautiful Mediterranean coast. The six-day race covers 150 challenging miles of the Lycian Way, an ancient trade path built 1,700 years ago but with 3,000-year old roots dating back to human civilizations pre-dating the Bronze Age Hittite Empire. The Lycian Union, founded in the 2nd century BC, was the world's first democracy.

The Lycian Way Ultra Marathon, which is expected to attract an elite class of runners from all over Europe and beyond, features a course of ascents and descents from sea level to mountainous areas over 2,000 feet, through forests and rivers, across beaches, along cliffs, and past historical ruins, ancient cities, castles and amphitheatres. It begins in Fethiya and ends in the ancient city of Phaselis, encompassing almost half of the historic Lycian Way. The course is so rugged that organizers estimate that roughly 40 percent of it will be covered by trekking rather than running.

The race will be conducted in stages of varying lengths with additional checkpoints providing water and any necessary medical support. Competitors are required to use GPS systems that will be provided, and to carry their own food and supplies. Overnight camping areas will be equipped with tents, water, firewood and medical services.

For 2012, organizers are planning to add a new route, which will be held in Cappadocia, an area of unique and outstanding beauty that combines history and nature. The Runfire Cappadocia route is a new and exciting adventure with the added challenge of running in the blazing heat.

For detailed information about the marathons, visit www.likyayoluultramaronu.com and www.runfirecappadocia.com.

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M. Silver Associates

(212) 754-6500, ext. 239

Miruna Seitan

miruna@msilver-pr.com



FIRST ISTANBUL SHOPPING FEST SLATED FOR MARCH 18-APRIL 26, 2011

**More than 90 Malls and All the City's Iconic Shopping Streets and Markets
to Offer Significant Savings for 40 Days and Nights**

NEW YORK, NY (January 31, 2011) - For 40 days and 40 nights, the first annual Istanbul Shopping Fest will transform the cosmopolitan city into a shopping mecca where visitors from around the world can take advantage of savings of 30 percent or more at various shopping arenas throughout the city. Taking place from March 18 to April 26, the festival will be complemented by virtually nonstop cultural activities, performances, concerts, parades and a variety of other festivities.

Under the auspices of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Istanbul Governor's Office and numerous other agencies, the Festival will include shopping until 11 pm, with special discounts featured after 10 pm, as well as price reductions and activities at some of Istanbul's most famous markets including Taksim, Nişantaşı, Şişli, Bakırköy, Fatih, Bahariye, Bağdat and the iconic Spice Bazaar.

The discounted rates are not the only attraction of the Istanbul Shopping Festival. Attendees can look forward to free gifts, raffles, and prizes including a brand new car every day during the festival. Additionally, Turkish Airlines is supporting bargain hunters and shopaholics who attend the festival by offering special fares; the airline is even considering increasing the baggage allowance!

The Festival is set to be a celebration for shopping lovers to visit Istanbul-- a city that has been a top choice for shoppers for more than 1,500 years. From hip boutiques in trendy neighborhoods and colorful bazaars and markets to over 90 modern malls featuring top designers, travelers and locals can expect a diverse shopping experience when perusing Istanbul's wares. Famous for its handmade rugs, clothing, antiques, spices, sweets, footwear and accessories, visitors to Istanbul rarely walk away empty-handed.

For more detailed information about the Istanbul Shopping Festival, visit www.istanbulshoppingfest.org

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Press Contact:

M. Silver Associates

(212) 754-6500

Carrie Hyman

Carrie@msilver-pr.com



TULIP FESTIVAL, ISTANBUL'S ISLANDS AND NOTEWORTHY PALACES SHOWCASE A UNIQUE FACE OF ISTANBUL THIS SPRING

New York, NY (April 14, 2011) - The vibrant, hip, yet historic city of Istanbul is the perfect location for a spring getaway, thanks to the multitude of attractions it offers visitors, from its annual Tulip Festival to the nine islands known as the Princes' Islands.

One of the main reasons for visiting Turkey now is that in springtime, Istanbul's gardens are full of tulips – the traditional flowers of Turkey. From tulip season to the beautiful Judas trees that ornament the city during this time, from lesser known palaces to even lesser known islands, Istanbul can be a surprising destination year-round, with plenty to see and do even before the start of the busy summer season. The month of April is also an ideal time to visit Istanbul because the city has moderate temperatures, fewer tourists and somewhat lower prices than later in the spring and summer.

Below is a listing of some of the attractions that should be on travelers' list for an out of the ordinary vacation experience this spring:

- ♦ **The Princes' Islands:** Located 12 miles southeast of Istanbul, in the Sea of Marmara, this chain of nine islands is the perfect destination if you're looking to plan a day to escape the city buzz. The first thing you'll realize once you arrive on any of the islands is that there are no cars. Take the ferry and discover the charming island of Heybeliada (Heybeli for short), which is home to the Deniz Lisesi (Turkish Naval Academy), founded in 1773, and is now host to a number of restaurants as well as a shopping strip, bakeries and more. The island's landmark is the hilltop Hagia Triada (Holy Trinity) Monastery, dating back to 1894, since Byzantine times. The largest island in the group, **Buyukada** (Great Island), impresses visitors through its gingerbread villas climbing up the slopes of the hill and the twin cupolas of the Splendid Otel provides a landmark and a lovely spot to spend an afternoon. The island preserves its natural greatness represented by pine woods, groves of mimosa and magnolia. One of the most romantic spots on the island is the area called Dil Burnu, which is a perfect location for watching idyllic sunsets. The island also has its own yearly festival which consists of a series of concerts, films, dance and theater productions, exhibitions and water sports on the Istanbul Islands, mainly Buyukada. The festival begins in the second week of July and brings the buzz to the island for an entire week.

- ◆ For centuries Istanbul has been bathed in purple every spring when the **Judas trees** bloom. It is rumored that the city of Istanbul was founded when the Judas trees were in bloom, which is also a symbol of power and riches. Touring the city when the trees are in bloom is an experience in itself and offers a unique view of Istanbul.
- ◆ Istanbul's lesser known palaces include **Maslak Kasri**, the Sultan's hunting lodge and resting place, as well as **Malta Kosku** which was built in the mid-19th century by the Sultan Abdulaziz in the heavily forested park and used as a relaxing mansion for the Sultans and their ladies. For an impressive view of the Bosphorus, the **Hidiv Kasri** mansion and its popular tower is a top choice. The mansion has a monumental fountain at the entrance, rising all the way to the roof, which is covered with stained glass. The **Yildiz** Palace is known as the fourth Ottoman palace built in Istanbul after the Conquest. Ideally located in a large park of flowers, tulips, plants and trees gathered from various parts of the world, the palace offers one of the most beautiful panoramic views of the Bosphorus. **Ihlamur Kasri** is formed of two buildings; Merasim kiosk which is used for ceremonies, and the Maiyet kiosk which is reserved for the court of the sultan or his harem. **Kucuksu Kasri** was built in the mid-19th century along the Bosphorus Strait, near the Anatolian Fortress on the Asian side. First used as a hunting lodge or a resting place by several sultans, the pavilion has been restored and is now functioning as a museum, featuring European-style architecture and furniture. **Aynalikavak Kasri**, with a Divan room and an audience hall decorated with Sultans' Tugras, also offers a research center for traditional old Turkish musical instruments where occasionally Turkish traditional music concerts are held.
- ◆ Admire the **Istanbul Tulips** in Emirgan Park, a historical urban park located in the heart of Istanbul. During April and May, you will spot these spring flowers everywhere in the city. One of the largest parks in Istanbul, Emirgan has several tulip gardens and a special garden was established in the park in the 1960s to revive the city's tradition of tulip cultivation. Although tulips are associated with Holland, commercial cultivation of the tulip began in the Ottoman Empire. The flower slowly entered the Turkish culture as it has been utilized as a motif in the traditional sewn Ottoman garments, the Sultans' carefully crafted tulip-embroidered caftans, and even received its own name during the historical period known as Tulip era (*Lale Devri*). Since 2005, an annual international tulip festival is organized in Istanbul every April making the park attractive and very colorful with these flowers.

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M. Silver Associates
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miruna@msilver-pr.com
212-754-6500



'STARS OF ISTANBUL' TO SHED A LIGHT ON UNICEF TURKEY, THIS FALL

NEW YORK, NY (April XX, 2011) - This fall, the stars will be shining in broad daylight on the streets of Istanbul. In an effort to draw attention to "A Brighter Future for Children" movement and to support UNICEF Turkey, Istanbul will play host to its largest outdoor arts event between September 1 and November 30, 2011. Residents and visitors to Turkey's cultural capital will be treated to a visual feast of color and ornament set amongst the city's permanent attractions.

Similar to the CowParade programs held throughout the world, 'Stars of Istanbul' is commissioning artists to decorate star-shaped statues to display throughout Istanbul's most prominent areas. The three month event will then close with an auction on December 17 –proceeds from which will benefit UNICEF Turkey.

The star, chosen as the program's symbol by renowned Turkish designer Aziz Saryer, represents "success and fortune for humanity." 'Stars of Istanbul' aims to support the arts and artists, instill an awareness of social responsibility, reveal the richness of Turkey's cultural heritage and provide a positive contribution for the city of Istanbul.

'Stars of Istanbul' will not only beautify the city and demonstrate how art can be incorporated into everyday street life, but it will also provide a bright future for the children of Turkey.

For more information about Stars of Istanbul, or to schedule an interview with Zeynep Helvacı, please call at +90212-252 2995 or email at bilgi@starsofistanbul.com.

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Thanks for your input Linda!

I will let Olivia know that we will select the pubs/editors highlighted below as well as Blackbook, and I will add a few more editors/freelancers to this list.

From: Ayares, Linda
Sent: Wednesday, May 18, 2011 1:06 PM
To: Hyman, Carrie
Cc: Seitan, Miruna; Dincetin, Haldun
Subject: RE: June 02 NY Media Tour List- Turkey Tourism

I highlighted the ones that I would most like to see included in the media tour.
The agency knows David Handschuh well, Stephen at Departures, Douglas at Elite (we now have Bill Stubbe in Turkey), Michelle Higgins, Jennifer Flowers.
Odd that Sherman's Travel is not on this list
It is a win to do a media tour with Conde Nast, Travel and Leisure, NY Times.

I assume that you have to select which ones we will call and which ones they will call. Pick the ones we really want, and that we know well. We know Eva Leonard well but Turkey is not a business travel destination for us, as it is for Turkish Airlines.

- **Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel:** Thomas Berger, Andrea Minarcek, Marc Peyser
- **BlackBook:** Bryce Longton
- **Bloomberg Businessweek:** Charles Dubow
- **Business Travel News:** Jay Boehmer
- **Business Traveler:** Eva Leonard
- **Conde Nast Traveler:** Alison Humes, Beata Santora
- **Daily News:** Robert Dominguez, David Handschuh
- **Departures Magazine:** Stephen Wallis, Joshua David Stein
- **Elite Traveler:** Douglas Gollan, Bill Stubbe (traveling in Turkey now)
- **ForbesLife:** Ricahrd Nalley
- **The Huffington Post:** Kate Auletta
- **In Transit:** Michelle Higgins
- **New York Post:** David Landsel, Chris Bunting
- **The New York Times:** Danielle Mattoon, Michelle Higgins, Monica Drake
- **TIME:** Deirdre Van Dyk
- **Travel + Leisure:** Ann Shields, Clara Sedlak, Jennifer Flowers
- **The Wall Street Journal:** Andrea Petersen, Candace Jackson

Olivia Seely
Account Executive - Consumer Brands
250 Hudson Street | New York, NY 10013 | T 212.299.3958 | F 212.704.0117
olivia.seely@edelman.com | www.edelman.com



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47TH PRESIDENTIAL CYCLING TOUR OF TURKEY SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 24-MAY 1

Professional Teams from Europe, UK, Canada and US to Cover 862 Miles in Eight Days

NEW YORK, NY (February 16, 2011) --- American cycling enthusiasts and other visitors will have the chance to watch international competition at its most challenging when professional teams from across the United States, Europe, the UK and Canada set off on the 47th Presidential Cycling Tour, the *Tour of Turkey*, on April 24 in Istanbul.

The eight-day event starts in Istanbul and covers 862 miles through Turkey's most magnificent landscapes before finishing in Alanya on the Mediterranean coast on May 1. The eight-stage event follows Turkey's southwestern coastline, encompassing diverse terrain, from mountains to seaside fishing villages, and includes some of the country's most famous tourism destinations, including Kusadasi, Bodrum, Marmaris, Pamukkale, Denizli and Fethiye. The course enables those who follow the international sports as well as the more casual traveler to experience a comprehensive sampling of Turkish culture, history and natural beauty while enjoying one of the world's most exciting and grueling sports events.

"Whether or not they are serious cycling fans, the *Tour of Turkey* is the perfect reason to visit Turkey and see many of our most famous destinations and landmarks during one of the most beautiful times of the year," said Ebru Ejder, director of the Turkish Culture and Tourist Office in New York. "For cycling enthusiasts, this is the chance to watch one of the most important races in international racing, and enjoy a unique vacation at the same time."

Since its upgrading in 2010, the *Tour of Turkey* now qualifies as one of the most prestigious cycling events in international competition. Presented by the Turkish Cycling Federation under the auspices of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey and organized in compliance with the standards of the Cycling Tour of France since 2008, the event meets the 2. HC (Hors Category) of racing that is considered as the Champions League of world cycling by the International Cycling Union.

For those who are unable to be at the event in person, international televised coverage of the race demonstrate that Turkey's attractions extend far past Istanbul and include scenic resort towns offering tranquility and luxury on par with the world's finest 'sun-and-fun' getaway destinations.

For more information on the Presidential Cycling Tour of Turkey visit www.tourofturkey.org.

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M. Silver Associates

(212) 754-6500

Carrie Hyman

Carrie@msilver-pr.com



**TURKEY'S ANCIENT ART OF WINE-MAKING IS
REAPING MAJOR AWARDS AND INTERNATIONAL ACCLAIM**

**'Discover the Roots – Inaugural Wines of Turkey Conference & Tasting,'
February 24 in London, is Latest International Showcase**

NEW YORK (February 11, 2011) — Wine tourism is big business, as travel officials and visitors alike in Europe, Australia, South Africa, the U.S. and elsewhere will attest. Now, with an impressive string of major awards and growing international acclaim, Turkey, which may have been producing wines longer than any other place in the world, is making a case for visiting its own wine regions and sipping the local varietals as part of a uniquely memorable vacation experience.

With more than 800 indigenous grape varieties, Turkey ranks sixth in the world for grape production, with also the sixth largest grape-growing area, after Italy, China, USA, France and Spain, according to Wines of Turkey, the umbrella organization that represents the Turkish wine sector and aims to develop the wine market to increase exports. At the 2010 London International Wine Fair, Turkey's seven leading wineries drew the attention of experts and wine enthusiasts alike when almost three-quarters of the 39 Turkish entries in the International Wine Challenge (IWC) received awards.

These wineries will be showcased again in London, on February 24, during a "Discover the Roots – Inaugural Wines of Turkey" conference and tasting. Featuring leading wine experts, scientists, wine makers, master classes, question and answer sessions, and wine pairings, the event is sure to focus additional attention on the rapidly evolving wine industry of Turkey and its implications for not just exports to the rest of the world but the potential for Turkey to establish itself as a major wine destination for Americans as well as Europeans.

One of the speakers at the London conference is Dr. Patrick E. McGovern, a biomolecular archaeologist at the University of Pennsylvania, who has specialized in the origins of wine. According to Wines of Turkey and Dr. McGovern, Turkey is part of a region where wine-making possibly originated by 7000 B.C. "You might say that we were looking for the viniculture Garden of Eden. The eastern Taurus, Caucasus, and northern Zagros mountains have long been considered the world center of the Eurasian grape: this is the area where the species shows its greatest generic variation and consequently where it might have been first domesticated. It is also becoming increasingly clear, as we pursue our combined archaeological and chemical investigations, that the world's first wine culture – one in which viniculture, comprising both viticulture and winemaking, came to dominate the economy, religion and society as a whole – emerged in this upland area by at least 7000 B.C.," McGovern has said.

For a country already world-famous for its antiquities, including many of civilization's most important archaeological sites, the addition of a uniquely rich and ancient tradition of wine making that is reflected in prize-winning modern varieties strongly enhances Turkey's appeal as an international tourism destination. Americans, for whom wine travel is a growing, multi-billion dollar industry, will be increasingly interested as they learn more about Turkey's potential.

The following descriptions of Turkey's leading wineries (courtesy of Wines of Turkey) provide a good starting point:

- Doluca – Dating from 1926, Doluca now has over 35 wines in four different categories: red, white, rose and sparkling. Its recent successes include the Karma series which introduced the fusion trend to Turkish wine, Turkey's first varietal wines in the Sarafin series and Safir, Turkey's first natural sweet wine. www.doluca.com
- Kavaklıdere - Was founded in 1929 and has a product range of 49 wines using the best Anatolian noble grapes. It is also growing international grape varieties in different Anatolian microclimates. Its wine production is carried out in Ankara, Cappadocia and Pendore in the Aegean region. Kavaklıdere exports 20% of its total production. www.kavaklidere.com
- Kayra – Produces wines from both indigenous Anatolian grapes as well as international grapes in two wineries, one in Thrace and the other in Eastern Anatolia, through the "on-site production" philosophy. The wide variety of Kayra wines offer diversity under the brands Kayra Imperial, Kayra Vintage, Buzbag Rezerv, Terra, Leona and Buzbag. www.kayrawines.com
- Likya – Produces wines in the vicinity of Lycian ancient cities, between Arykanda and Oenoanda. These cities used to be called Wiyanawanda in Hittite language. Its portfolio includes red wines such as Merlot, Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Kalecik Karasi, Okuzgozu, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier; and fine white wines such as Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay made from white grapes harvested chateau style at an altitude of 3609 feet. www.likyawine.co.uk
- Pamukkale – Established in 1962 as a family company, Pamukkale's vineyards are at an altitude of 2953 feet in Guney, Denizli, in the Aegean region. Since 1989, 20% of its production has exported to Germany and France. It has also been exported to the Netherlands, Denmark, Austria and other European countries. Its products include Senfoni, Anfora and Anfora Trio. www.pamukkalesarap.com
- Selendi - Produces a single brand of red wine every year using 'chateau-style winemaking' whereby grapes are carefully handpicked and processed on-site. Quality takes precedence over quantity. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Shiraz wines are blended in different ratios until the most desirable taste produces the Selendi wine for that year. www.selendi.com.tr

- Sevilen – A family-run establishment, Sevilen, was founded in 1942 with just 10 acres of vineyards in Izmir on the western Aegean coast. It now has 395 acres of vineyards there and also produces grapes in the cool Mediterranean climate of the Anatolian plateau. It has been working on the terroir approach with outstanding results. www.sevilengroup.com
- Vinkara - Produces grapes from vineyards at an altitude of 2230 feet in Kalecik, northeast of Ankara, a registered wine region with a special climate and terroir nourished by the Kizilirmak River. Its portfolio includes domestic and international grape varieties. www.vinkara.com

For more information about the Wines of Turkey, please visit www.winesofturkey.org.

About Turkey

Turkey is a modern country with a captivating blend of antiquity and contemporary and of East and West. The cradle of civilization and center of world history today stands as one of the fastest-growing tourism destinations in the world. Turkey was the site of the first human settlement; the seat of the Byzantine, Roman and Ottoman Empires; the birthplace of Homer and the last home of the Virgin Mary, just to name a few. Today Turkey, with its spectacular coastline, majestic mountains, cosmopolitan cities and quaint villages is one of the world's most fascinating destinations.

Press Contact:

M. Silver Associates

(212) 754-6500

Carrie Hyman

Carrie@msilver-pr.com



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**TURKISH CULTURE & TOURIST OFFICE ANNOUNCES OPENING OF WORLD'S
LARGEST MUSEUM OF ANCIENT MOSAICS**

**Intricate Artwork at Zeugma Mosaics Museum in Gaziantep Reflects Greek and Roman
Mythology, More than 2000 Years of History**

New York, NY (Date, XX) – Winning a race to save some of civilization's most important antiquities from the ravages of time and vandalism as well as the march of progress, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in Turkey has announced the opening of a new museum to display priceless mosaics dating back as far back as the 1st century BCE.

The Zeugma Mosaic Museum in Gaziantep is situated, literally, at the crossroads of history, encompassing pre-Hellenistic cultures and the Greek and Roman empires. Zeugma, thought to have been founded by a general in Alexander the Great's army, was initially two cities on either side of the Euphrates River. It grew and thrived over countless centuries because it was located at the easiest crossing of the river, exactly where major trade routes in the ancient world linked east and west as well as north and south. The city's location was considered so important by the Roman Empire period that Zeugma became a vital military center where tolls were collected on commerce and travelers. At one point the city was home to more than 70,000 people.

In the process, wealthy residents, businessmen, military officers, governors and other notables built impressive homes and villas distinguished by magnificent mosaics – on floors, in pools, courtyards, kitchens and elsewhere – to showcase their status, interests and heritage, including their own and the community's connections to the gods and goddesses of mythology. Some even contain captions and descriptions written in Greek. Because of Zeugma's position at the center of international trade and commerce, these mosaics represent a treasure trove of information about the interaction and assimilations of ancient cultures over the centuries.

These treasures – and an abundance of other valuable artifacts ranging from frescoes to burial objects – lay undiscovered for millennia. While Zeugma was first seriously studied in

the 1970's, little excavation was undertaken for another ten years. It was only in 2000, after suspected vandalized artifacts appeared in museums and private collections and when plans for new dams on the Euphrates meant that much of Zeugma would be forever flooded, that the race was on.

The result was an ambitious excavation project sponsored by the Turkish government, the California-based Packard Humanities Institute and American universities. The excavations discovered homes, public buildings and market squares that contained one of the largest and most important collections of Roman mosaic art ever found. Ultimately, a decision was made to build a museum to preserve and display the extraordinary mosaics from what has been called "one of the most important cultural heritage sites in Turkey." Built by the Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality, the 90,000 square-foot museum features a 7,500-square foot exhibition hall, numerous conference rooms and other facilities and replaces the Bardo National Museum in Tunis as the world's largest mosaics museum.

The extraordinary collection of mosaics includes depictions of Poseidon, god of the oceans and second only to Zeus in power, along with Oceanus and Theys, who, according to legend, had 6,000 sons and daughters that became the spirits of the earth's rivers, springs and streams. Demeter, the goddess of agriculture, is also present, as is Achelous, who gave Heracles what the world now knows as the "horn of plenty," or "cornu copiae." The famous warrior Achilles is another mosaic subject.

One of the most popular and visually striking mosaics depicts what is simply called the "Gypsy Girl" – a beautiful portrait of a young face with striking eyes that some experts believe may represent Gaea, the goddess of the earth. Other pieces show the marriage of Dionysus and Ariadne and the nine muses of Greek mythology.

For additional information about the museum, <http://zeugmamosaicmuseum.blogspot.com> or www.gaziantepmuzesi.gov.tr/eng are two good sources. Or contact the Turkish Culture and Tourist Office in New York at 212-687-2194 or in Washington, D.C., at 202-612-6800, or in Los Angeles at 323-937-8066 and visit their Web sites at www.goturkey.com or www.tourismturkey.org

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Press Contact:

M. Silver Associates

(212) 754-6500

Carrie Hyman/ Meredith Klinger

Carrie@msilver-pr.com / Meredith@msilver-pr.com